

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the remarks herewith, which place the application into condition for allowance. The present response is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS AND FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 34-56, 58-67, and 70-76 are pending in this application. Claims 34 and 59, which are independent, are hereby amended. Claims 1-33, 57, 68 and 69 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Support for this amendment is provided throughout the Specification, specifically at page 54.

No new matter has been introduced by this amendment. Changes to the claims are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103, or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicants are entitled.

II. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 34, 35, 37, 38, 40-46, 48, 52-54, 56, 58, 59, 61-67 and 72-76 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,479,206 to Ueno et al. (hereinafter, merely “Ueno”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,393,216, to Ootsuka et al. (hereinafter, merely “Ootsuka”).

Claims 39 and 60 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Ueno in view of Ootsuda and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,480,671 to Takahashi et al. (hereinafter, merely “Takahashi”).

Claims 35, 55, and 57 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Ueno in view of Ootsuda and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,393,216 to Reichlen et al. (hereinafter, merely “Reichlen”).

Claims 47, 49, 70, and 71 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Ueno.

Claims 50 and 51 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Ueno, Ootsuka, and in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,111,288 to Blackshear et al. (hereinafter, merely “Blackshear”).

III. RESPONSE TO REJECTION

Claim 34 recites, *inter alia*:

“wherein the microphone is extendible and retractable, an extending position and a retracting position switching an operation mode of the image pickup system.” (emphasis added)

Applicants respectfully submit that Ueno, Ootsuda, Takahashi, Reichlen, and Blackshear, taken either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the above-identified features of claim 34. Specifically, nothing is found in the references which the Office Action relied on that teaches or suggests “wherein the microphone is extendible and retractable, an extending position and a retracting position switching an operation mode of the image pickup system”, as recited in claim 34.

For at least the above cited reasons, claim 34 is allowable.

Claim 59 is similar, or somewhat similar, in scope with claim 34 and is therefore patentable for similar, or somewhat similar, reasons.

IV. DEPENDENT CLAIMS

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

Similarly, because Applicants maintain that all claims are allowable for at least the reasons presented hereinabove, in the interests of brevity, this response does not comment on each and every comment made by the Examiner in the Office Action. This should not be taken as acquiescence of the substance of those comments, and Applicants reserve the right to address such comments.

CONCLUSION

Please charge any additional fees that may be needed, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims are in condition for allowance and request early passage to issue of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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